

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending in the application. Claims 1-27 have been rejected.

Claims 1-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The rejection is respectfully traversed. The specification sets forth that the solution network includes the ability to dynamically verify knowledge within the solution network at Page 9, line 20 – Page 10, line 2. This portion of the specification provides support for the limitation of verifying the solution based upon the indicated a successful resolution.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 9-11, 15, 18-20, 24 and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Buffalo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,957,257 (Buffalo). Claims 3-5, 12-14 and 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buffalo as applied to claims 1, 10 and 19 above, and further in view of Heckerman et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,715,374 (Heckerman). Claims 7, 8, 16, 17, 25 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Buffalo as applied to claims 1, 6, 10, 15, 19 and 24, and further in view of Sullivan et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,615,240 (Sullivan).

Claims 1, 2, 6, 9-11, 15, 18-20, 24 and 27 are allowable over Buffalo.

Buffalo generally relates to automatic customer service maintenance in a communications network. More specifically, Buffalo discloses a method for automatically providing infrastructure maintenance for a customer report in response to a customer in a communications network that includes a core communications (voice and data communications) service and an Access Provider service. The system includes a Work-Flow Manager and a maintenance program scheduler. The Work-Flow Manager is arranged to trigger, for each customer report, each automatic software program of a plurality of automatic software programs in response to an associated milestone event for the customer report. The maintenance program scheduler is coupled to the Work-Flow Manager and is used for invoking a maintenance software program based upon criteria being met by the report.

When discussing Buffalo, the Examiner set forth:

waiting a predetermined amount of time to verify whether the customer contacts the solution network again (once a problem has been resolved, the e-maintenance system waits 24hours to close a ticket out if unable to contact customer, C6, L25-36, thereby giving the customer time to contact the system); and

indicating a successful resolution to the issue if no contact is made by the customer within the predetermined amount of time (inherently disclosed as the reference provides that the tickets are placed in queue to be closed out in 24 hours if no response is received from the customer, C6, L25-36, and close out of a ticket i2 interpreted to be synonymous with a determination of successful resolution of the issue, C6 L37-40) (Office Action dated 11/15/2007, Page 3).

The portion of Buffalo to which the Examiner refers sets forth:

When the automatic preparation for clearing program has completed execution, an automatic customer notification program displays the circuit trouble description to the customer via e-maintenance, a web-based system that provides customers direct access to view/update their trouble ticket, or by IVR. If the customer reports that the trouble has been fixed, the e-maintenance system automatically closes out the ticket. If the e-maintenance system is unable to communicate with a person, a message is left with an answering machine where an answering machine is available, and the ticket is placed in a queue to be closed out in 24 hours (Buffalo, C6, lines 25 – 36).

However, this portion of Buffalo does not disclose or suggest indicating a successful resolution to an issue if no contact is made by a customer within a predetermined amount of time as required by claim 1 and as substantially required by claims 10 and 19. Closing a ticket as disclosed by Buffalo is not a disclosure or a suggestion of indicating a successful resolution.

Additionally, when discussing Buffalo with respect to claim 6, which is now incorporated into claim 1, the examiner sets forth:

With respect to claims 6, 15 and 24, Buffalo discloses if the customer contacts the solution network within the predetermined amount of time on the issue, then indicating an unsuccessful resolution to the issue by the solution (interpreted to be the teaching that if the e-maintenance system is unable to communicate with the person, the ticket is placed in a 24 hour queue for closing and one skilled in the art would recognize that a any contact by a customer during the predetermine amount of time would be indicate that the problem had not been solved. C6, L25-36). Office action dated May 22, 2008, Page 4.)

However, the cited portion of Buffalo does not disclose or suggest indicating an unsuccessful resolution to the issue (i.e., the issue for which the solution network was contacted) by the solution if the customer contacts the solution network within the predetermined amount of time in a further attempt to resolve the issue, as required by claim 1 and as substantially required by claims 10 and 19.

More specifically, Buffalo, taken alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest a method for verifying solutions provided by a solution network which includes *automatically* associating a call from a customer with a solution that is provided to the customer to solve an issue; waiting a predetermined amount of time to verify whether the customer contacts the solution network again in a *further attempt to resolve the issue*; indicating a successful resolution to the issue if no contact is made by the customer in an attempt to resolve the issue within the predetermined amount of time; *indicating an unsuccessful resolution to the issue by the solution if the customer contacts the solution network within the predetermined amount of time in the further attempt to resolve the issue*; and, *verifying the solution based upon the indicating a successful resolution*, all as required by Claim 1 and as substantially required by claims 10 and 19. Accordingly, Claims 1, 10 and 19 are allowable over Buffalo. Claims 2-9 depend from Claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason. Claims 11-18 depend from Claim 10 and are allowable for at least this reason. Claims 20-27 depend from Claim 19 and are allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 3-5, 12-14 and 21-23 are allowable over Buffalo and Heckerman.

Buffalo is discussed above.

Heckerman relates to performing case-based reasoning. In the system of Heckerman, a belief network is utilized by the preferred case-based reasoning system for assisting a user in problem resolution. After resolving a problem of a user, the system updates the probabilities in the belief network to provide for a more accurate problem resolution upon the next invocation of the system.

However, Buffalo and Heckerman, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest indicating a successful resolution to an issue if no contact is made by a customer within a

predetermined amount of time, much less where the indication of a successful resolution includes incrementing a counter corresponding to the solution to indicate the successful solution, as required by claim 3 and as substantially required by claims 12 and 21, scoring a solution based upon successful resolution of the issue where a higher score for a solution indicates a more successful solution, as required by claim 4 and as substantially required by claims 13 and 22, or when a solution is indicated as a more successful solution, the solution is presented to a customer higher on a list of available solutions, as required by claim 5 and as substantially required by claims 14 and 13.

Claims 7, 8, 16, 17, 25 and 26 are allowable over Buffalo and Sullivan.

Buffalo is discussed above.

Sullivan discloses a method for automated technical support in a computer network. The method initiates a guided self-help session in response to entry by a user of a problem area and description. During the self-help session, the user is provided with an option to escalate to live help. If the user exercises that option, the system automatically provides a support engineer at the server with a data stream summarizing the self-help session. During the live help, the support engineer may then repeat a portion of the user's self-help session; view information generated during that session, and/or execute certain actions with respect to the user's machine, all from the engineer's desktop.

However, Buffalo and Sullivan, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest indicating a successful resolution to an issue if no contact is made by a customer within a predetermined amount of time, much less, where if the solution is indicated as unsuccessful, then the solution is escalated into a correction workflow, as required by claim 7 and as substantially required by claims 16 and 25, or where when the solution is escalated into a correction workflow, a product specialist reviews the solution for any needed correction, as required by claim 8 and as substantially required by claims 17 and 26.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

The Commissioner is authorized to deduct any additional fees that may be necessary and to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 502264.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being electronically submitted to the COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS via EFS on August 20, 2008.

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Respectfully submitted,

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